



West Valley City **POLICE**



A Nationally Accredited Law Enforcement Agency

Office of Chief Lee W. Russo

3575 South Market Street, West Valley City, Utah, 84119

WVCPD Becomes Only Nationally Accredited Police Agency in Utah

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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West Valley City is now home to the only nationally and independently accredited police department in the entire state of Utah. After a challenging three and a half year journey, the WVCPD has received national accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (**CALEA**). National accreditation is considered to be the “gold standard” in law enforcement and is a distinction held by fewer than five percent of police departments nationwide.

We invite you to join us as the certificate of accreditation is bestowed upon the West Valley City Police Department by CALEA during a meeting of the West Valley City Council. This presentation will take place tonight, May 9, 2017 at 6:30 pm in the West Valley City Hall Council Chambers, 3600 South Constitution Blvd.

West Valley City Police Chief Lee Russo set the police department on the path to accreditation shortly after he was appointed to the force in August 2013. Chief Russo wanted a department that was transparent, that had an open dialogue with the community and that operated under the best practices of law enforcement. Chief Russo determined that securing CALEA accreditation was the best way for the WVCPD to look critically at itself in an effort to meet those goals.

“Aligning the Department’s operations and policies with CALEA standards is a painstaking and intensive process requiring a critical review of the entire Police Department,” explained Chief Russo. “It represents our commitment now, and our commitment long into the future, that this city’s police department is committed to continual improvement and best practices in all that we do.”

As part of the accreditation process, the West Valley City Police Department was required to demonstrate its compliance with 159 comprehensive “best practices” standards governing all facets of operations, including

both internal and public transparency and accountability. "We are dedicated to maintaining accountability and transparency and serving our community with the highest degree of honor, professionalism and service possible," said Chief Russo. This critical review is "about doing business consistent with the way you say you're going to do business and holding yourself accountable," said Chief Russo. "That's why it takes three years."

To assess the WVCPD's progress toward meeting its strict standards, CALEA assessors came to West Valley City in early October of 2016. The assessors scrutinized the department, reviewed the policies and procedures of the WVCPD and made any final recommendations for adjustments. The assessors also sought feedback from the community and received what CALEA Assessor, Rob Sofie called a "pretty overwhelmingly positive" response." Sofie explained, "there's clearly a flavor, a theme [that] things have changed over the last three years, and it's being favorably received and reported."

Receiving this accreditation is only the beginning of a lasting commitment to this community for the West Valley Police Department. Accredited agencies must submit themselves again for an independent audit every three years, so police departments must constantly work to improve themselves. "We have to continue to work to maintain this accreditation and demonstrate our competency over and over again, said Chief Russo. "This is a commitment that we gladly make. West Valley City residents deserve the best and we are committed to continuously striving to be our best."

What: CALEA National Accreditation Presentation

Where: West Valley City Hall, City Council Chambers, 3600 South Constitution Blvd.

When: Tuesday, May 9, 2017

Who: West Valley City Police Chief Lee Russo and CALEA representative, Mark Mosier will be available to speak with media.

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